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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8187
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
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RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0514
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0436
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0498
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 2041
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0845
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE 0074
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
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RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHDS/USMISSION USAU ADDIS ABABA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 000177

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/04/2014
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SUBJECT: FNDD SEES LIBYA RUSHING FOR A DEAL

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 175

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Dennis Hankins for
Reasons 1.4 (b and d)

11. (C) The FNDD's rotating President Abdel Koudouss Abeidna confirmed to Charge March 5 that President Abdallahi will probably go forward with the Friday trip to Libya to meet with Muammar Qadhafi. Abeidna said he had already received a partial readout from the FNDD delegation in Triploi that is expected back in Nouakchott tonight -- ready to fully brief the President before his own trip. Abeidna said the FNDD delegation had met briefly with Qadhafi but had dealt mainly with Qadhafi's staff who had stressed "you have to be ready to give something up." The delegation had held to the line that they were prepared to talk about the conditions for some type of talks -- notably the release of detained FNDD politicians and a commitment by the military to abandon their strategy (meaning, at minimum, dropping the idea of elections in June) -- but that there are not yet the conditions to actually start a negotiation. The FNDD delegation found Qadhafi's staff "rushing them" and intent on a quick deal. With Qadhafi coming to Nouakchott himself within the next few days for his annual Id al-Mauloud ceremony (Qadhafi goes somewhere in Africa to celebrate the Prophet's birthday. He chose Mauritania this year and has invited 2000 guests. Rumors say the whole delegation including guests, staff and security will approach 8000), there is the sense Qadhafi wants to wrap everything up during his visit.

12. (C) Abeidna said the FNDD leadership in town met the evening of the 4th to discuss strategy. Most felt the President had already given up too much by agreeing to not complete his electoral mandate and move towards new elections. There was no willingness for further concessions in response to the Libyan request to "give something up." FNDD leader and President of the National Assembly Messaoud Ould Boulkheir is in Tripoli today and is expected to meet with Qadhafi.

13. (C) Depending on the timing and logistics of the visit in Tripoli, Abeidna told Charge the President may ask to meet with diplomats (at least the U.S. and/or the P5) in Libya.

HANKINS